

Southend Pathways

Fact sheet

Background

Beginning in late 2015, demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct will require buses to move to a new, permanent pathway for travel to and from downtown Seattle. Metro has been evaluating potential pathways for connecting transit from south of downtown along the new Alaskan Way surface street to the Third Avenue transit spine.

This pathway is crucial to maintaining speed and reliability of service for riders from southwest and northwest Seattle neighborhoods such as West Seattle and Ballard that travel to, from, and through downtown Seattle.

- Viaduct routes carry more than 22,000 bus riders per day. Another 8,000 daily riders of the RapidRide D Line are also affected by this corridor.
- Use of the RapidRide C and D Lines has grown significantly since they began service in fall 2012. C Line ridership is up 33%; D Line ridership is up 9%.

Analysis of potential pathways

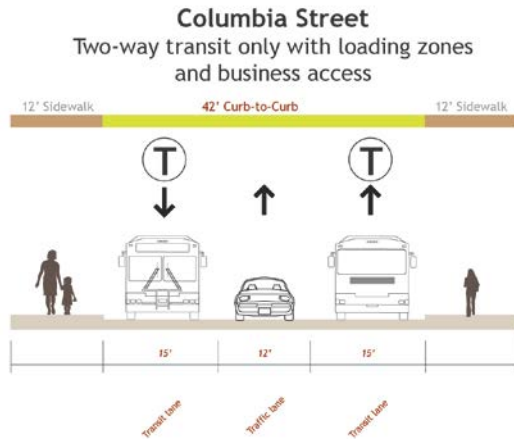
Working with the City of Seattle, Metro evaluated several potential pathways, including surface streets and Interstate 5. Several were eliminated due to traffic conflicts, significant likely impacts on transit reliability, difficulty with turns, and other challenges that would prevent delivery of high-quality transit service to the downtown Seattle core. The table below summarizes the pathways evaluated and the challenges of each.

Potential pathway	Reasons for being eliminated
1st Avenue S and 4th Avenue S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant travel time increases: 5-8 minutes, depending on direction of travel. • Lack of reliability—at-grade train crossing can delay buses up to 20 minutes. • Poor connectivity to stadium area.
Yesler Way and James Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts with ferry operations. • Added travel time delay due to turn movements. • Difficult turns for buses.
Jackson Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher traffic volumes expected on Jackson Street. • Right-of-way constraints due to First Hill Streetcar operation. • Increased turn movements and pedestrian conflicts. • Difficult turns for buses.

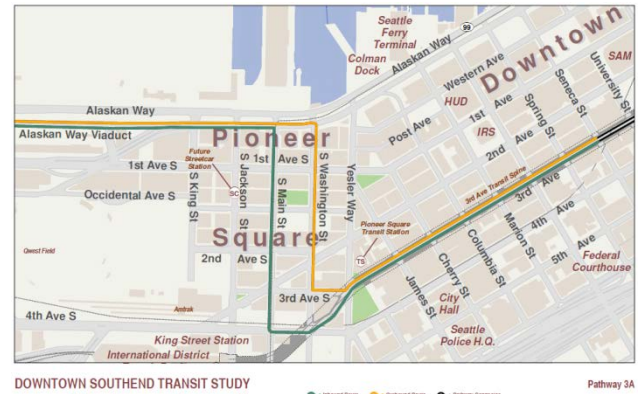
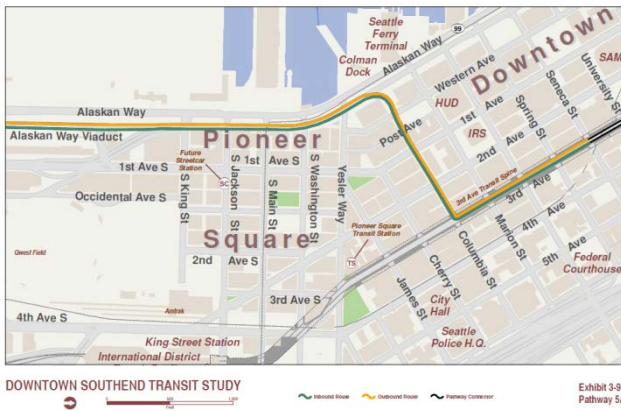
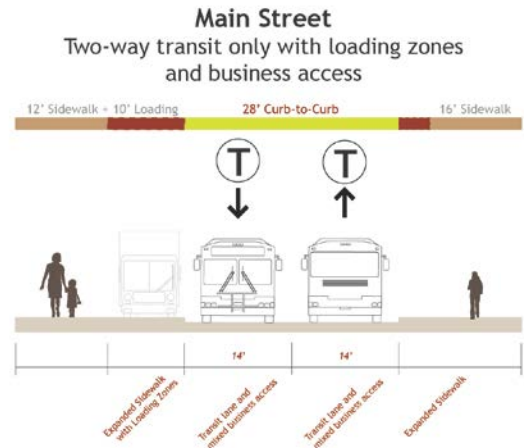
In the past, Metro and the City of Seattle have also evaluated capital projects such as the Lander Street overcrossing as a possible solution. The estimated cost of this project is \$150 million, not including an additional \$20-\$30 million needed for street and transit improvements on Fourth Avenue. Given funding limitations, this project is not being considered further at this time.

Two pathways identified for further consideration

Two-Way Columbia Street



Main/Washington Streets or Two-Way Main Street



Outreach and rider survey

Throughout 2012, Metro staff members reached out to neighborhood groups in Pioneer Square, Ballard, Queen Anne, Interbay, and West Seattle about this project. They also reached out to Alaskan Way Viaduct project groups, such as the Central Waterfront Stakeholders and the north and south portal working groups, and the Downtown Seattle Association.

In June 2012, Metro used a survey to get feedback on the two potential pathway options from bus riders. More than 1,500 riders—from Ballard, Queen Anne, West Seattle, White Center, Burien, and other neighborhoods that would be affected by this change—responded. Generally, they preferred the Columbia Street pathway over Main or Washington streets (see chart at right), and stressed the importance of having faster, more-direct trips regardless of the pathway chosen.

Selecting a preferred pathway

Given input from riders, neighborhoods, and the pathways analysis, a two-way Columbia Street pathway seems most viable. Metro has identified the following investments that would be required in order to make this pathway work for transit.

1. Continuous priority pathway on Alaskan Way and Columbia Street.

- All-day, two-way bus lanes in both directions on Alaskan Way, from Dearborn Street to Columbia Street and Third Avenue.

2. Street and intersection movements on Columbia Street to improve transit operations.

- Transit signals and intersection modifications.
- Changes to the roadway profile.

3. Refinements to the Columbia Street hub area, currently included in the City of Seattle's waterfront design, to improve multimodal access for all users.

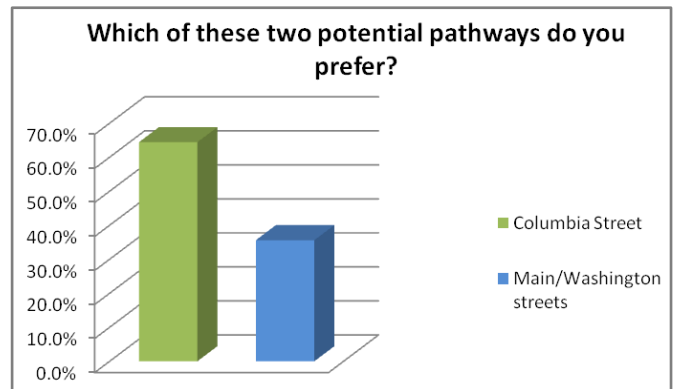
- Ease of connections between bicycles, pedestrians, and transit.
- Enhance transit presence with signage and customer information.

4. Enhanced bus stop locations to serve riders accessing the Stadium area, Colman Dock, and Columbia Street.

- Adequate curb space for bus stops and stations serving RapidRide and local services.

Next Steps

- Continue to coordinate with City of Seattle to define operational issues and better define the timeline for decision making.
- Outreach to key stakeholders such as the Downtown Seattle Association, neighborhoods, and businesses to provide an update on the project.



More riders said they preferred the two-way Columbia Street pathway.